

citly told the government that they would organise the race in Turkey only if tobacco sponsorship were allowed. The project will cost the Turkish government an estimated US\$100 million and the first Grand Prix race is due to take place in 2005. No doubt Turkey, and the other new Grand Prix countries such as China and Bahrain, will be requested to amend their tobacco control legislation.

Under the terms of the FCTC all countries signing up to the treaty are required to ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship if such a measure is allowed under their constitution. When the FCTC comes into force, it will be the end of the FIA's ability to force countries to make a choice between F1 and effective public health law. There will no longer be any need for Bernie Ecclestone to bother prime ministers around the world. Perhaps it's now up to the Canadian prime minister to offer Ecclestone a new job.

As this article went to press, it appeared that Ecclestone had not been successful this time. The Canadian Grand Prix was reinstated in the F1 calendar, despite the refusal of the Canadian government to amend the law.

LUK JOOSSENS

Consultant to European Cancer Leagues & International Union against Cancer, Brussels, Belgium: joossens@globalink.org

UK: getaway cars?

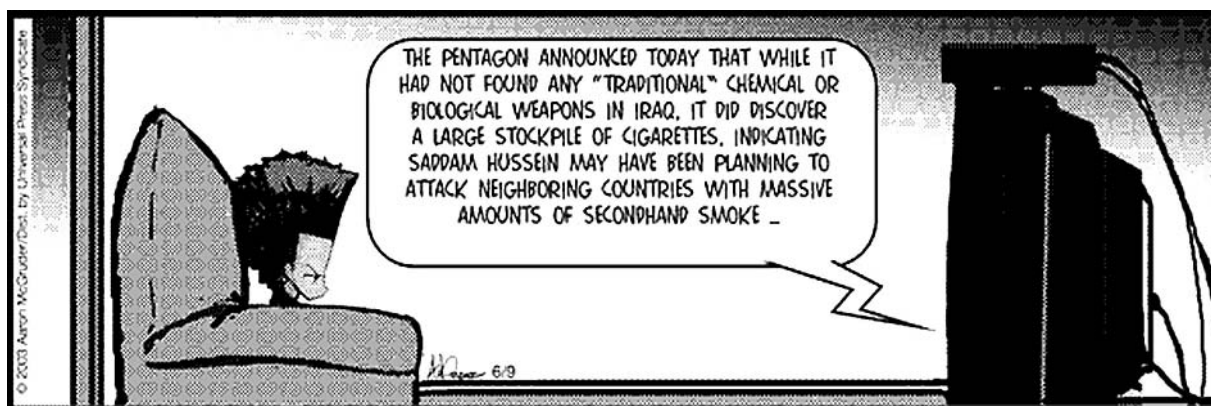
Despite all newspaper, magazine, and billboard advertising of tobacco products having been banned in the UK since last February, several features on the British Grand Prix extolling the Jordan team, sponsored by Benson & Hedges (B&H) cigarettes, appeared in the August edition of the men's magazine *Maxim*. Each double page spread of the eight page piece bore the heading, "Maxim F1 special in association with Benson & Hedges Jordan", with a B&H logo above a panel which itself contained two more, larger B&H logos at top and bottom. Altogether, the eight pages contained 40 B&H logos. Enquiries revealed the apparent involvement of an advertising agency working on behalf of Gallaher, makers of B&H in the UK. A formal complaint was made to trading standards officers by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), contending that the placing of the articles was in breach of the ad ban, though Formula One's exemption from the ban on tobacco sponsorship until 2005 may be cited in defence. ASH says the case illustrates how loopholes or exceptions to any ad ban will be exploited to the full, and that only a total ban, rigorously enforced, can stop tobacco promotion.

Myanmar: BAT creates a stink

BAT inadvertently created a bad smell in certain official circles in the USA recently when what appears to be an attempt to help Myanmar (Burma) increase its foreign currency earnings went wrong. BAT has been under fire from human rights campaigners and some governments on the grounds that its continued business partnerships with the military regime in Myanmar discourage reform. However, the background to the latest problem was distinctly fishy.

BAT is thought to have established relationships with local exporters to win foreign currency to buy raw materials for its Rangoon plant, though it insisted it had no direct connection with fish or any other kind of foodstuffs. Nevertheless, a report from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last December came to light recently showing that a shipment stamped with the name of BAT's subsidiary Rothmans of Pall Mall contained a "filthy, putrid or decomposed substance...unfit for human consumption". Nothing new there, you may think; the FDA must simply have opened some of the cigarettes. But the packing cases contained not cigarettes, but frozen, peeled shrimps.

The lighter side



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